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Parks and Recreation Minutes 11/09/2004

Park and Recreation Commission Minutes

Tuesday, November 9, 2004 - 7:00 p.m.

Approved - Meeting Minutes

The meeting came to order at 7:00 PM.

Commissioners Present: Joseph Carabello, Thomas Caccavaro, Nancy Campbell, Leslie Mayer, and Don Vitters

Recording Secretary: Laura Munsey

Others: Carolyn Kenney and Deb O'Donnell (Needs Assessment Committee)

1. Welcome and Approval of Minutes

Mr. Carabello welcomed the Commissioners and Guests to the November 9th meeting. Minutes of the October 12th meeting were distributed and will be voted on at the December 14th meeting. Mr. Jalbert is at the Massachusetts Park and Recreation Association Conference and will not be present this evening.

MOTION: (Made by Thomas Caccavaro, 2nd by Nancy Campbell)

The Park and Recreation Commission approve the September 14th Minutes as amended.

Vote: Unanimous (5-0 in favor of the motion)

2. Recreation Needs Assessment Update

Mr. Carabello reported that the Town Manager called with concerns regarding appropriating money out of the capital plan to finance a formal needs assessment. A meeting was held Thursday November 4th with Tony Lionetta, Patsy Kraemer, Nancy Galkowski, Jonathan Jalbert, Don Vitters, and Joe Carabello present. It was suggested that the \$10,000 budgeted for feasibility studies should be used for Architectural plans for improvement projects, and there are concerns that if this money is used for a needs assessment these funds may not be considered appropriated in a proper way. It was also suggested that the town can not afford to fund a formal needs assessment at this time. A recommendation was made that the Vision 20/20 annual census insert may be an alternative method to obtain the required information from the community at large and the Town Manager requested that the Park and Recreation Commission develop 5 Survey Questions to include in the Vision 20/20 survey.

Leslie Mayer reported that survey questions regarding recreational needs were included in the Vision 20/20 survey 4 years ago. She also stated that the School System recently received a physical education grant regarding Health and Wellness and the Vision 20/20 committee will be including survey questions in this year's survey related to this topic. Kate Cremens-Basbas is coordinating the school grant and Ms. Mayer believes all funds for the school grant have already been committed and does not believe that any additional funding is available in that grant to fund a recreational needs assessment. She stated that the grant is earmarked for physical educational issues in the schools and community, however members of the needs assessment are welcome to discuss this grant with Ms. Cremens-Basbas, and Ms. Mayer would be happy to help coordinate a meeting.

Mr. Vitters acknowledged and thanked the members of the needs assessment committee for all their efforts to date. He further stated that the Symmes Advisory Committee solicited and gathered a great deal of community input regarding recreational needs

during the Symmes Development process and recommended that much of the needed data may already be available and recommended the needs assessment committee contact Brian Rehrig. He further suggested that a 2-3 page summary memo be prepared which consolidates all the information obtained from the previous 20/20 survey, the Symmes Advisory Committee, as well as other information independently obtained by the Committee. He also informed the members of the Needs Assessment Committee that they always have the option of putting together a Warrant Article requesting funding from the Town at next year's Town Meeting.

Tom Caccavarro recommended that the committee talks to the Redevelopment Board regarding their vision of a facility on or near the bike path, primarily the land the Committee inquired about behind the Veteran's Memorial Skating Rink. He further informed the Committee Members that they can also talk with the Finance Committee regarding this project.

3. Capital Project Updates

Mr. Carabello met with Kevin O'Brien regarding funds for Crosby, Waldo, and Locke. Discussions related to the higher than expected bids for the Park Improvement Projects. They are currently reviewing the plans and specifications, looking at the minimum standards. The original plans may have been overly ambitious for the money available. It will be necessary to go back to the Friends of Waldo group and look at cut backs.

Mr. Caccavarro also suggested that the bidders may have overbid because they don't need, or want the work at this time. He suggested that January may be a better time to get competitive bids. Plans will in all likelihood need to be trimmed.

Ms. Campbell expressed concerns with cutting the quality of the construction project at Crosby tennis courts, for if they are not renovated properly the town will continue to have the problems with surfacing and drainage. Funds from the previous Crosby project will be researched to see if any can be allocated to the Tennis Courts.

Mr. Carabello informed the Commission that Debbie Hayes recommended and is researching whether businesses in the area of Locke Play ground will be willing to make donations to help defray the cost of funding this project. This area is so small and limited in possibilities that cuts will be difficult to make.

Jonathan Jalbert will provide to Mr. Vitters any payments made to date to Heimlich. Mr. Vitters will talk to Larson, sit down with them and trim the projects. He further recommends the Commission re-bid the project after the first of the year.

Spy Pond Shores is going very well. A Portable dam is holding back 6' of water for construction of the boat ramp, which is scheduled to be poured in the next two weeks.

Mr. Vitters reported that he expects minor increases in cost. Mike Byrne, Director of Inspectional Services, is recommending changes in the fountains (back flow) which will result in an estimated increase of \$1,000; concrete cap on wall should be replaced resulting in an approximate increase of \$1,500; the temporary dam may result in a possible increase of \$2,900 but this is under discussion; a 12" line going into the pond should be removed and be capped. It would be necessary for Dominic Lanzillotti to sign off for a change order for these additional projects if they are necessary.

Mr. Caccavarro stated he will only vote on an increase if a change order is complete. He would like to review any change orders with the cost clearly defined prior to taking any votes now or in the future.

Mr. Vitters informed the Commission of the Contractors Request to Close Spy Pond Play ground December 1st for several weeks. Signs will be posted and the Boys & Girls Club will be notified. They are concerned about safety issues related to the Construction Project.

MOTION: (made by Don Vitters, 2nd by Leslie Mayer)

THE PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION SHALL CLOSE SPY POND PLAYGROUND BEGINNING DECEMBER 1, 2004 UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS (5-0 IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION)

Robbins Farm. Roly Chaput liked the product recommended for the wall, and will come back at a later date with a proposal. The Friends of Robbins Farm will fund this project.

4. Committee Updates

Field Maintenance Committee. Ms. Campbell reported that the Committee will research how other towns allocate, rotate, use, and permit fields. They will further research where permit fees and/or user fees go.

Field Users Committee. Mr. Carabello reported that the Committee met and had discussions regarding the damage at Thorndike Field. It was learned that 1 group decided not to play due to field conditions, and a 2nd group decided to play resulting in damage. A third team may have also played on the field. Mr. Carabello stated he went and took pictures at Thorndike and there were areas that had standing water on the field. It was discussed that DPW usually makes recommendations regarding field closings. Monday through Friday, Theresa DeBenedictis will now make the call on Thorndike, Jonathan Jalbert will make the call on Buck, Hills Hill, and Summer Street Fields. DPW will make the call on other fields. Over the weekend neither the DPW or Recreation Department has the staff or resources, and it will continue to be necessary to expect User Discretion. The Committee will meet again in December and will discuss the Spring 05 schedules.

Sports Center Improvement Committee. There is still no lease in place, which is a major problem. Senator Havern, Jonathan Jalbert, Thomas Caccavaro and Brian Sullivan are working on a proposal.

Open Space Committee. Colonial Circle and Knowles Farm may be subdivided into private ways with multiple units constructed on single lots. If recorded the Board of Selectmen have very little power to control this project. Colonial Circle is in a Historic District. The Open Space committee is still concerned about the Boulder at the end of Ryder Street. It is a legitimate right of way. Bike Path Ballards are needed before the boulder can be removed. Questions were raised regarding the former vita course at Menotomy Rocks Park. Much of the remains have rotted away and there currently are no plans or interest to renovate this course.

FOCCA. Leslie Mayer reported that Kevin O'Brien is optimistic that a dog park will go in at Reeds Brook (McClellan Fields). Discussions will continue regarding the possibility of a dog park in the area formerly used by the ROADS Construction Trailers at Thorndike Field.

5. Recreation/Rink Updates.

A special permit request was submitted by Kelley Grealish-Kelly on behalf of the Arlington Relay for Life Committee and the American Cancer Society to reserve Summer Street Field from 12:00 noon on June 17th, 2005 through 12:00 noon on June 18th. This annual event is usually held at Peirce Field at AHS but is not possible due to the construction project. They anticipate 300 people and will follow all town requirements for lights and music and food. They recommend the use of portapotties which they will provide. Tents will be placed not to interfere with irrigation on the field. In case of rain the inside of the Skating Rink will be used, and staffing will be provided if necessary, however the committee prefers to hold the event outside. It was suggested that use of the Recreation Center facilities be explored rather than spending money on portapotties and possibly instead of erecting tents.

The Commission requests that the Recreation Department notifies abutters of the planned event, and would like sufficient time for the abutters to notify the Commission of any concerns regarding this event. The vote to approve this event will be placed on hold until the neighbors are notified. The Recreation Department will notify abutters.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:00 pm